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CENTENNIAL

OF THE

Congregational Church,

NEWPORT, N. H.,

OCTOBER 28, 1879.

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

OF THE

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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At the annual meeting of the church, held January 6, it was voted to celebrate the approaching centennial, and Dexter Richards, Richard S. Howe, Benjamin M. Gilmore, and the pastor, Rev. E. E. P. Abbott, were appointed to make the necessary arrangements. In due time, sub-committees were chosen, invitations sent out, and ample arrangements made. On the morning of the day there assembled in the church a large audience, including former pastors and members of the church, neighboring clergymen, and friends.

The officers of the day were,—

DEXTER RICHARDS, *President.*
EDWARD A. JENKS, *Toast-Master.*
BENJAMIN R. ALLEN, *Musical Director.*
MRS. ELLEN E. KIMBALL, *Organist.*
FRANCIS BOARDMAN, *Committee on Collation.*
MRS. WM. W. HUBBELL, *Committee on Decorations.*

The order of exercises was as follows:

Invocation,—Rev. G. R. W. Scott.

Anthem,—"Wake the Song of Jubilee."

Reading of the Scriptures,—Rev. Charles E. Harrington.

Prayer,—Rev. E. H. Greeley.

Address of Welcome,—Pastor.

Hymn,—"O God, beneath thy guiding hand."

Historical Address,—Albert S. Wait.

Reminiscences,—Rev. Henry Cummings and Rev. G. R. W. Scott, the only ex-pastors who survive.

Hymn,—written by Edward A. Jenks.

A thousand hearts are swelling
With gratitude to-day,
For here, to this His dwelling,
Our Saviour leads the way:
We turn the ancient pages,
We scan the yellow leaves,
Where Jesus, through the ages,
Has written of His sheaves.

We 've heard the simple story
Of that courageous band,
The young, and heads all hoary,
Who came to this fair land,—
The pathless wild before them,
The sleepless stars above,
With Heaven bending o'er them,
And great hearts full of love.

The dews of June* were glist'ning
Among the tree-tops there,
And softest breezes list'ning
To sadly cadenced prayer,

*In June, 1766, these men, eight in all, five having families, arrived in town Saturday night; and the following day they spent in religious worship, under the shadow of a pine tree. Since these men met under that tree, to the present time, the Congregationalists have never permitted a Sunday to pass without meeting for religious worship.—*History of Newbort.*

When on that Sabbath morning
The fire began to glow,—
This Church's faint, sweet dawning,
A hundred years ago.

A hundred years!—how glorious
Their voices, and how strong,
As down the years, victorious,
The echoes roll along.
O Christ! like them undaunted
When overwhelmed with woe,
Come bless the Church they planted
A hundred years ago.

Benediction,—Rev. C. H. Holbrook.

At one o'clock, the whole congregation sat down to a bountiful collation, served in the chapel.

In the afternoon, brief responses and addresses were made by past and present members, representatives of neighboring churches and others. Prayers were offered by Rev. A. W. Bunker and Rev. C. M. Palmer.

Tea was served in the chapel at 6 o'clock.

In the evening, the past century was discussed in its more general aspects,—material, intellectual, and spiritual,—by Rev. Henry Cummings, Rev. G. R. W. Scott, and Rev. E. E. P. Abbott.

Prayers were offered by Rev. Geo. F. Chapin and Rev. Charles A. Downs, and the exercises closed, the audience joining in the hymn,—

"Come, let us anew our journey pursue."

The day was stormy, but the occasion was an enjoyable and profitable one for all those who were able to be present.

There was so much of permanent interest incorporated in the historical address, that, by the liberality of Dea. Dexter Richards, it is here preserved in a more durable form, and is sent out to the many who have had a part in the history of the first century of the church, or who have been interested in its prosperity.

HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

BY A. S. WAIT.

I propose to speak of the progress of our church from its foundation, when it had become the visible outgrowth—the ripened fruit—of the teachings and the labors of men in long preceding generations.

In the town of Killingworth, in our then sister province of Connecticut, lived, in the middle and latter part of the century preceding the present, many devout men and pious women, reared under the pure influences of the gospel, and taught the principles of church independence. Eight of the young and enterprising men of this community determined to go out from the land of their fathers and make themselves homes in the wilderness of the north. Becoming of the Proprietors of the township of Newport under the charter granted by King George III, in October, 1761, they arrived on a Sunday morning in June, 1766, a few days more than ten years before the Declaration of American Independence, upon the beautiful plain in the westerly part of our village. And there and then began the observance of the Christian Sabbath in our town, which, by the descendants and successors of this little colony, has to our day had no interruption.

Let us pause for a moment to dwell upon the scene. No bell rang out its cheerful notes to listeners devoutly waiting for its call: no church edifice opened its doors to receive the worshippers within consecrated walls: no spire pointed

to heaven to aid the thoughts of the people of God to ascend to the throne of grace. There was only surrounding nature—beautifully picturesque, indeed, and exemplifying the grandeur of the wilderness. Hardships and difficulties were in prospect, but all trusted in the guiding mercies of Jehovah, whose glorious sun shone forth resplendent with encouragement and promise, and from beneath the waving branches of a stately pine went up the incense of prayer and of praise.

From this time these people met regularly on the Sabbath for worship, several years in a private log-house, where the services were conducted by a layman. The community having received accessions to their numbers, in November, 1772, they, as proprietors of the township, voted to build a Proprietors' house, 30 feet in length and 20 in width, with one fire-place, to be used also for religious worship and for a school. The building was completed the following year. When the settlers first obtained the services of a regular preacher is not ascertained; it is certain, however, that it was prior to June, 1775, for in a warrant calling a meeting of the Proprietors on the 29th of that month was an article,—

"To see if the Town will hire Mr. Eliezer Sweetland to preach the Gospel in Newport for some time *longer;*"—and at an adjourned meeting on the next day it was

"Voted, that Mr. Robert Lane, Mr. David Dudley, and Mr. Josiah Stevens, be a Committee to treat with Mr. Eliezer Sweetland in regard to our employing him in some future time."

Whether, or how long, Mr. Sweetland remained does not appear, but in the warrant calling a meeting of the Proprietors, to be held on the 29th of April, 1778, was an article,—

"To see if the Town will agree to have Mr. Kendall *stay* and preach with us."

At the meeting thus warned, Robert Lane, Benjamin Giles, and Josiah Stevens were chosen a committee "to

confer with Mr. Thomas Kendall to see if he will *continue* a space of time to preach the Gospel in this Town of Newport." At the same meeting, held by adjournment on May 4th, it was

"Voted, that Mr. Thomas Kendall stay and preach in this Town and the Town to contribute every Sabbath for to support it."

Also,—

"Voted, that the Committee confer with Mr. Thomas Kendall to see if he will return to this town as soon as he can with convenience after he hath accomplished his purposed journey."

Whether Mr. Thomas Kendall continued "a space of time," or whether he returned after he had accomplished his purposed journey, or whether the journey was ever accomplished, the record saith not. If so, the "space" was short, for in the warrant for a town-meeting, to be held March 9 of the succeeding year (1779), was an article,—

"To see if the Town will choose a Committee in order to look out a candidate to settle with us in the work of the Gospel Ministry."

And at an adjourned meeting, on the 15th of the same month, it was

"Voted, that Aaron Buell and Josiah Stevens be a committee to make application to the Rev. Mr. Hall of Keene, to look out for a candidate to settle in the work of the Ministry in the Town of Newport."

Hitherto no church organization had been formed. But it now came to be felt that the cause of the Master, and the religious interests, present and prospective, of the community, required the work to be carried on in a more systematized manner. It was therefore determined that a church should be gathered. No accounts tell us of the discussions preliminary to this purpose, but, on the 28th day of October, A. D. 1779, just one hundred years ago to-day, a meeting was held, when the Rev. Aaron Hall, pastor of the church at

Keene, the only clergyman present, was chosen moderator, and Aaron Buel was chosen scribe. Articles of faith and of discipline, and a church covenant previously drawn up, were then adopted as the rule of the new church. They show the founders to have possessed competent education, and sound and clear views of Christian faith and duty. They cannot fail to be of interest to the Christian of to-day. In how far do they assure us of faithfulness? In how far do they admonish us to return to the way of the fathers? Are they the true light of Christian faith and conduct, or has a century developed new light, which shows a new, a better, and a safer way? Let each answer to his conscience in the presence of Him with whom the centuries make no change. They are in these words:

"We whose names are under written, being desirous of forming ourselves into a distinct Church of Christ for y^e^ sake of enjoying y^e^ special ordinances of y^e^ gospel according to our own consciences, have come into y^e^ following mutual agreement with each other, as in y^e^ fear of God, respecting articles of faith & discipline.

"I. As to articles of faith, we say we believe y^e^ scriptures of y^e^ old & new testament is y^e^ only infallible rule of faith & practice: but as all denominations & sectaries among those who profess christianity pretend to form their religious sentiments on y^e^ scriptures, we think it expedient to have some plain & explicit articles of faith for a test of orthodoxy, y^t^ we may know whether we understand y^e^ scriptures alike, or not. For, we look upon it necessary y^t^ every C^hh^ of Christ be agreed, at least in y^e^ fundamentals of y^e^ christian religion: & for y^e^ purpose above, we profess to believe the shorter, & longer Catechisms & articles of faith all composed by y^e^ Assembly of Divines at Westminster to be y^e^ best human composition explanatory of y^e^ word of God.

"II. We believe y^e^ following summary articles of faith to be contained in y^e^ sacred scriptures, & very suitable for

every one understandingly to give their assent to, who are admitted to special ordinances in y^e^ C^hh^. The same we ourselves profess to do.

"1. We believe y^t^ there is but only one living and true God in three persons, y^e^ Father, Son, & Holy Ghost, the great creator, preserver, & governor of y^e^ worlds.

"2. We believe y^t^ God did make man in his own image, consisting in knowledge, righteousness & holiness; but, man by his disobedience, fell from that holy happy state, & has plunged himself into a state of sin & misery, out of which he cannot recover himself, & in which he might have been justly left of God to all eternity.

"3. That God out of his mere good pleasure, has opened up a new & living way of life to fallen sinful man, by y^e^ mediation of his Son Christ Jesus, who has offered up himself a sacrifice of atonement to God for y^e^ sins of y^e^ world: & y^t^ all are invited to put their trust in him, to return home to God through him, & y^t^ there is salvation in no other way.

"4. That mankind in their present fallen state are dead in trespasses & sins, & so contrary to God, & a life of holiness, & opposed to reconciliation, y^t^ without y^e^ special influence of divine grace they will never surely hearken to, & comply with y^e^ call of y^e^ gospel, & y^t^ therefore y^e^ conversion & salvation of sinners is really owing to distinguishing sovereign grace of God in Christ Jesus.

"5. That although we are justified by faith, & saved by grace, yet y^e^ law as a rule of life remains in full force to believers, so y^t^ perfect holiness of heart & life is their duty; nor does y^e^ gospel of free grace countenance, or encourage them to live in y^e^ least sin whatever.

"6. That all true believers shall finally be recovered by y^e^ grace of God to perfect holiness & be perfectly happy in y^e^ full enjoyment of God to all eternity; while y^e^ wicked & impenitent shall go away into everlasting punishment.

"The following covenant of grace we do hereby declare our sincere & hearty consent to & do judge it expedient & necessary all who are admitted to special privileges in this C^hh shall do y^e same.

"We do now, in a most humble & solemn sense of an indispensable duty to obey y^e call of Christ in y^e gospel, who, notwithstanding our sinfulness & lost miserable state by nature, mercifully invites us to partake of y^e blessings of y^e covenant of grace in y^e internal & external privileges thereof.

"As we have obtained mercy & help of y^e Lord, we do now with y^e most profound awe & reverence, in y^e presence of y^e dread majesty of heaven & earth, before angels & men avouch y^e Lord Jehovah y^e Father, Son & Holy Ghost, to be our God & supreme good, giving up ourselves to him through Jesus Christ, y^e mediator of y^e new covenant, in y^e way, & on y^e terms of y^e covenant of grace, to love y^e Lord our God, with all our heart, with all our souls & with all our might, y^e whole of our lives, trusting in him, rejoicing in his reign & government, & yielding obedience to him in all things.

"We also give up ourselves to one another according to y^e will of God, promising to watch over one another as becomes saints; &, in our place bearing testimony against sin, & in any wise will rebuke a brother & not suffer sin upon him, loving our neighbor as ourselves, walking in all y^e ordinances of Christ's house, keeping up that discipline in his C^hh, which he enjoins in his gospel, with all y^e genuine expressions of true love to immortal souls y^t they may be saved in y^e day of y^e Lord Jesus. We covenant to be faithful to one another as brethren, upholding y^e worship of God in this place; y^t we will not scandalously absent our ourselves from any part of instituted worship; but do what in us lies to prepare ourselves for y^e improvement of all y^e ordinances of Christ. Particularly in our families, we will as frequently as may be read or cause to be read y^e word of

God, & attend y^e^ same with sincerity of heart y^t^ it may dwell richly in us; subjecting ourselves to y^e^ discipline of Christ according to his word, which is contained in y^e^ scriptures of y^e^ old & new testament, which we take as y^e^ only rule of our faith & manners.

"We further covenant to give up our children to y^e^ Lord in baptism, engaging by his help to bring them up in y^e^ nurture & admonition of y^e^ Lord; setting good examples of piety, righteousness & sobriety before them, taking them under our watch & discipline as a C^hh^ to see y^t^ they walk in all y^e^ commandments & ordinances of Christ, as becometh his disciples & followers; & in our families & as a C^hh^ unitedly to be much in prayer for y^e^ conversion & salvation of our children, teaching them & all under our care to know & fear y^e^ Lord.

"Whereas we have given up ourselves to y^e^ Lord & to one another in y^e^ Lord, we purpose & promise y^t^ we will live together in this holy fellowship, in all holy watchfulness over ourselves & each other. Amen.

"We who have given up ourselves to God & to each other in y^e^ Lord & have engaged to devote our offspring to God, in covenant, heartily invite all our Christian neighbors to join us in this solemn relation, y^t^ we & they may walk together as becomes Christians in holy fellowship. Amen.

"III. Agreeably to y^e^ above articles of faith & covenant, we believe no one is a qualified member of communion in all special ordinances but such as are sound & knowing in y^e^ fundamental doctrines of y^e^ christian religion, & are persons of real holiness & honesty, professing cordial subjection to Jesus Christ, & y^t^ y^e^ C^hh^ ought not to admit any to communion in all special ordinances but those who to a judgment of charity, regulated by y^e^ word of God, are persons of this character.

"IV. As to y^e^ practice of owning y^e^ covenant in y^e^ half

way form, according to y^e^ usage of some C^hhs^, we wholly reject as what we verily believe has no foundation in y^e^ word of God.

"CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

"1. Candidates for communion shall be examined by y^e^ pastor, when y^e^ C^hh^ has one; but if there is no pastor, y^e^ moderator shall ask questions, before y^e^ C^hh^ at stated C^hh^ meetings, after this each brother shall have liberty to ask any question he pleases, for satisfaction, & if y^e^ candidate is accepted by y^e^ C^hh^ he shall after y^t^ stand propounded two weeks, y^t^ y^e^ congregation may have opportunity to inform, in case y^e^ candidate has been guilty of scandal. The pastor & C^hh^ shall judge of the validity & regularity of complaints & of y^e^ sufficiency of evidence which may at any time be offered.

"2. That no person shall be admitted to special privileges barely upon a letter of recommendation without examination because particular C^hhs^ receive members upon different principles; however, letters shall be looked upon requisite.

"3. That in case of discipline no vote shall be valid unless y^e^ majority of y^e^ brethren be in y^e^ vote. The pastor shall officiate as moderator & his vote be no more valid than one of y^e^ brethren. But, if it should ever so happen y^t^ y^e^ majority should differ in judgment from y^e^ minority about any case of discipline then y^e^ case shall be referred to a mutual Council for their help & advice. The Council shall consist of a number of regular pastors of regular C^hhs^ which we hold communion with, & their delegates, & in case y^e^ pastor shall be accused of scandal or heresy y^e^ matter shall be judged & determined by a council consisting of pastors of regular C^hhs^ & their delegates mutually chosen. unless they shall agree otherwise. But if either party will not consent to a mutual Council y^e^ other party shall be at liberty to call a Council to advise them as above specified.

"4. If any shall speak reproachfully to or of & concern-

ing y^e^ pastor, or diminutively, or contemptuously of his doctrines, he shall be deemed & treated as a scandalous offender except it be by regular complaint to y^e^ C^hh^ or by way of evidence to such complaint. And before any complaint shall be exhibited against a pastor y^e^ previous steps of private dealing directed in y^e^ 18 of Matthew shall be duly observed ; y^e^ same method shall be strictly observed in regard to a private brother.

"5. Every member of y^e^ C^hh^ shall duly observe y^e^ Lord's day as a sabbath, & constantly attend y^e^ public worship of God, & duly observe his ordinances every sabbath or Lord's day (when there is opportunity for it, unless necessarily detained) or be judged guilty of scandal & be proceeded with accordingly ; & if any such person neglect y^e^ public worship, & ordinances of God any one sabbath, he shall be ready to give y^e^ reason of his conduct herein to every brother who asks him ; & if any man who is a brother shall neglect y^e^ worship of God in his family (if he have any), or shall not pray morning & evening with his family & daily read some portion of y^e^ sacred scriptures with or to his family (extraordinaries excepted) shall be deemed guilty of scandal, provided also he be not necessarily absent. If any brother or sister shall neglect to instruct his or her family, if he or she have any, & y^t^ most frequently & diligently according to his or her ability, & as much as in them lies to restrain them from evil courses, shall be deemed guilty of scandal, & be proceeded with accordingly, & in case he is obstinate he shall be treated & prayed for as an heathen. If any man have children, or servants, that shall not submit to his instructions, he shall call in y^e^ assistance of some of y^e^ brethren, & if they cannot prevail, then shall y^e^ man proceed farther according to rules of discipline in other cases.

"7. That those out of the C^hh^ who have been guilty of scandal, of which proper notice shall be taken, if they ever afterwards desire privileges in y^e^ C^hh^, shall first make confession of sin & repentance towards God.

"8. We who enter into this covenant and agreement, do promise & engage, as in y^e^ presence of God, y^t^ we will faithfully watch over ourselves, & one another, & exhort one another while it is called to-day, & if we see our brother or sister taken in a fault we will most surely reprove him in y^e^ spirit of meekness, & not suffer sin upon him; we will do it immediately, if circumstances admit, if not we will watch for opportunity, & do it as soon as may be, from sincere love to him according to y^e^ rule given in y^e^ 18 of Matthew. We engage we will be very careful & tender of our brother's good name & character in y^e^ world, & never expose his failings any further than will be necessary for his good to his edification, but will cover them with y^e^ mantle of love.

"9. We will make it our constant endeavor to provoke to love & good works, laboring to keep y^e^ unity of y^e^ spirit in y^e^ bond of peace among ourselves, & as much as in us lies live peaceably with all men: y^t^ we will behave ourselves soberly and righteously towards them who are without, y^t^ the word of God be not blasphemed, & in all things we will endeavor faithfully to keep & conform ourselves to this our covenant articles & agreement; for which we pray God to give us grace to y^e^ praise of his great name. Amen."

To these solemn articles were subscribed the names of

Robert Lane	Josiah Stevens	Esther Lane
Daniel Dudley	Esther Buel	Jane Buel
Daniel Buel	Susanna Dudley	Chloe Wilcox
Aaron Buel	Lydia Hurd	Mary Buel.
Elias Bascom	Eunice Bascom	
Matthew Buel	Mary Stevens	

Following the adoption of this church union, the record shows these entries:

"Voted, y^t^ Mr. Robert Lane, Mr. Daniel Dudley, Mr. Daniel Buel, Aaron Buel, Mr. Elias Bascom, Lieut. Matthew Buel, Mr. Josiah Stevens, Mrs. Esther Buel, Mrs. Susanna Dudley, Mrs. Lydia Hurd, Mrs. Eunice Bascom, Mrs. Mary

Stevens, Mrs. Esther Lane, upon hearing each one's relation and experience and asking each one's forgiveness, receive each other into their love and fellowship.

"Voted, y^t^ Capt. Samuel Hurd, Mrs. Jane Buel, Mrs. Chloe Wilcox, having heard their relations and experience, and they having asked y^e^ brethren's forgiveness, be taken into love and fellowship.

"Benjamin Giles received a member on condition he get his letters."

The following, of the same date, seems worthy of especial note:

"Voted, 1. That inasmuch as some of y^e^ brethren plead y^e^ right of exhortation according to y^e^ gospel, while others of y^e^ brethren do not look upon it expedient for brethren to exhort in public, y^t^ this matter shall be attended to according to y^e^ following restrictions. If any brother shall be under y^e^ influence of y^e^ holy Ghost & very deep impressions of divine things upon his mind, may give a word of exhortation without offence, after sermon, or at any other proper time, y^e^ brethren being judges whether he does it according to y^e^ measure of faith God hath given him, as set forth by y^e^ Apostle in Rom. 12 C^h^. Yet no one not of y^e^ C^hh^ shall assume this right, nor shall any brother assume y^e^ air of a minister, or preacher, in his exhortation. Notwithstanding this restriction, if any brother is disposed to withdraw before a brother begins to exhort after a public exercise or in y^e^ time of his exhortation, he may do it without giving offence; for we think there is so much liberty in y^e^ gospel as for brethren to be at liberty in these things, & y^t^ they may be done without disorder or distraction.

"V. 2. That it be looked upon a breach of communion for brethren to be at taverns or elsewhere at unseasonable hours, drinking or countenancing such meetings, unless special business call them to such places.

"V. 3. That it be looked upon a breach of communion for brethren to use profane language, or foolish vain jesting.

"V. 4. That it be a breach of communion for brethren to game at cards or not to discountenance every thing of y^e^ like complexion."

The foundations of the church having been thus established upon clear principles of Christian faith, we find evidences in the records of the town of efforts to secure a minister to settle over the flock thus gathered; and early in December, 1779, a committee was chosen to confer to that end with a Mr. Tracy, who had been preaching as a supply, but without success. It appears, also, that between this and August of the following year a Mr. Samuel Wood sojourned for a time, imparting the words of truth to the people; and on the 24th of the same August the town voted to him a gratuity of one hundred pounds, and a yearly salary of forty-five pounds, and after two years to increase it five pounds a year until it should reach seventy pounds per year, on condition that he would settle over the church. The offer seems not to have been accepted. It appears, however, that Mr. Wood remained here as a preacher for some length of time, for at a town-meeting, held Nov. 24, 1780, it was "*Voted*, that a tax of six hundred dollars be granted and paid to the Rev. Samuel Wood for his labor in preaching the gospel in this Town." We learn from the town records the amount in our money of the above offer to Mr. Wood, for, at a town-meeting held March 13, 1781, it was "*Voted*, a tax of thirty pounds, *equal to one hundred silver dollars*, be granted to defray the necessary charges of the Town."

In the spring and summer of 1781 a strange case of discipline occurred, which evidently became a matter of considerable moment, so much so that the Rev. Mr. Hall, of Keene, and the Rev. Pelatiah Chapin, of Windsor, Vt., were called in to assist in conducting the inquiry. The complaint was by a prominent member of the church "against brother Benj^n^ Giles, in y^e^ following particulars, viz.

"1. For causing a book to be read in public published by Mr. Whitefield, in which men in an unregenerate state are represented to be half beast & half devil.

"2. For speaking against profane swearing in public."

The record states,—

"In y^e^ first, Brother Giles appeared ready to defend Mr. Whitefield's description of unregenerate men as true. As to y^e^ second, Brother Giles vindicated his conduct, in public speaking against profane swearing, as no ways out of character."

The record proceeds,—

"The C^hh^ found y^t^ nothing in this view on brother Giles' part could be considered matter of offence in y^e^ charges brought against him."

The complaining brother was so much dissatisfied with the decision, that he requested to have his relationship with the church dissolved; and the request was granted by the church.

With no reference but to the sentiments of our own times, it would be difficult to understand how a question like that involved in the second charge against Brother Giles could have been raised before a Christian church, if we are to regard the complaining brother as of sound mind. It is certain, however, that up to a period which, in the times of which we are speaking, is to be regarded as recent, profane swearing was a very common vice. Our English ancestors, clergy as well as laity, were so much addicted to it as to become the subjects of animadversion from surrounding nations. This incident seems to show that it had not in New England, in the latter part of the last century, come to be universally held inconsistent with a Christian life.

In July, 1781, although still without a pastor, there were thirty accessions to the church.

During the year 1782 much effort was made to obtain a

minister to settle over the church. These efforts were at length crowned with success; and on the 22d of January, 1783, the Rev. John Remmele, having received a call from the church, concurred in by the town, was formally ordained as its pastor, he thereby obtaining a tract of land set apart by the charter of the town to the first settled minister. His yearly salary was seventy pounds, which, according to the above estimate, would be $233.33 in silver.

Mr. Remmele was a man of ability. He represented the towns of Newport and Croydon in the state convention for the ratification of the Federal constitution. His vote in the convention was adverse to the ratification. His ministry, however, was not a fortunate one. Serious dissensions arose in the church, which nearly wrought its destruction. Grave charges affecting his moral character were made against him; and in February, 1791, his actual ministry ceased, though he was not formally dismissed until the October following. He carried away all the church records existing at the time, and although much effort was made to obtain them from him, they were never recovered. They were afterwards partially restored, from loose papers found in the archives, by the succeeding pastor, the Rev. Mr. Wines.

Even the dates of Mr. Remmele's call and settlement were for some time lost to the church, and on the 20th day of December, 1803, a vote was passed reciting the fact, and appointing Jesse Wilcox, Uriah Wilcox, Samuel Hurd, Phinehas Wilcox, and Ezra Parmelee "a committee to attend to this business." On the 28th of the following March the committee reported that the call by the church was in December, 1782; that it was concurred in by the town; and that on the 17th of January, 1783, the town voted to have Mr. Remmele ordained on the 22d of the same January. Some circumstances, however, not disclosed, seem to have led the committee to doubt as to the precise day, and they report that the ordination took place either on the 22d or 23d of that month.

The condition to which the church had become reduced, and its own sense of weakness, are sufficiently disclosed by the following record of the meeting on July 3, 1791, at which the council was agreed on for Mr. Remmele's dismission. It was then "Voted, y^t y^e C^hh will *reunite* & go on together as a C^hh according to y^e plan & constitution y^t it first settled upon in discipline, &c. 15 males & two females members present."

It is worthy of notice, that on the 9th of September of that year, Maj. Jesse Wilcox was chosen a deacon of the church by "a unanimous vote," and that "he accepted of the same." He had been chosen to that office in August, 1785, but it would appear from this record that he then declined it.

The following shows that at this period the church held clear views upon questions distinguishing Congregationalism from Episcopacy.

"Jan'y 10, 1783. At a meeting of y^e C^hh of Christ in Newport to take into consideration y^e validity of Mr. Carpenter's ordination, as he has proposed to unite with y^e Windsor Association, & it is y^e opinion of this C^hh y^t though they think it expedient in order to communion & fellowship y^t ordination be performed by C^hh Pastors—but are very far from thinking y^t ordination or setting apart to y^e work of y^e ministry, is descended down to this day in a lineal succession from y^e Apostles, by laying on of y^e hands of C^hh pastors, but we do believe a person having ministerial gifts & qualifications, being set apart by a C^hh of Christ to y^e ministry of y^e gospel, has all y^e essentials of a gospel minister."

We find also a record showing the spirit which at this period prevailed in the church, and the conduct expected of its members before the world.

"At a C^hh meeting held in Newport Lord's day evening at Jesse Wilcox's Nov. 6th 1791, Voted, y^t it is matter of grief & offence to y^e C^hh to have any member of it conduct

rudely on public training days, or shoot any gun except by command of y^e^ officer."

In the autumn of 1791 the town determined to erect a house for public worship. For this purpose, it made a purchase of Absalom Kelsey of the elevated land opposite his dwelling, and still so prominent above the intervale at the south and east of the present highway, as it bears to the left from the foot of the Claremont hill towards Unity; and there was erected the first house devoted to public worship in the town. The work was soon executed, and the building stood prominent above all others of the village until within the memory of many still living. The town-meetings were also held in it; and it was designated in the town warrants, at first, as "the Meeting House;" then, the Baptist church having been erected, it was called the "Congregational Meeting House;" then the "South Meeting House;" and after the erection of our present church edifice the town meetings were warned at "The Old South Meeting House" until the erection of the town hall in 1826. It had neither fire-place nor chimney. I have stood on its site, and thought of the men and the women who worshipped there; and I wished some monument might from that hill preserve the memory of Newport's ancient story.

From the dismission of Mr. Remmele the church was without a settled minister for something over four years. On the 13th of December, 1795, a call was extended to Mr. Abijah Wines to settle over the church, at a salary of forty-five pounds for the first year, with twenty cords of firewood; the amount, in money, to be raised twenty shillings each year till it should reach fifty-two pounds. His residence had been for some years previously in Newport, and he was already a member of the church, having been received into its communion on the 6th of March, 1789. He accepted the call, and was ordained on the first Wednesday of January, 1796. Possessing a farm, which he continued to occupy, a vote was passed in December, 1798, to add to his

salary $50, for the purpose of hiring a laborer in the summer season. After the formation of the society in 1803, this additional sum was made the subject of a distinct vote each year during his pastorate. Mr. Wines was an earnest and faithful laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. In the autumn of 1798 his labors bore fruit in a large religious awakening, and from September to November there were twenty-six added to the church. From January to November of the following year there were five more additions.

From this time there were few accessions to the church until the latter part of April, 1810, when there began a manifestation of the influence of the Holy Spirit which seems almost to remind us of the apostolic times. It certainly has no parallel in the history of our own church. On the 22d of April of that year, Joseph Sawyer and his wife united with the church. Then, in the following June, there were twenty-one accessions; after which the numbers each month were such that at the end of the following January, a space of nine months, nearly two hundred had been added to the Christian army of Newport, besides a large number who united with the Baptist church, which was also doing a noble work in the cause of the Master.

From this time the accessions were fewer, though the numbers were considerable for several succeeding years.

About this time there began to grow up a difficulty among the members of the church, which, in the summer of 1812, reached very serious proportions. It arose in consequence of objections being made by two of the brethren to the reception, during the revival of 1810, of an applicant for membership. Repeated and earnest efforts were made to bring about a reconciliation, but without avail. The dissatisfaction increased to such a degree that in the summer of 1812 the whole church seems to have become involved, and many withdrew from its communion. At length the subject was submitted to that association of churches then existing, called the Consociation. They advised that the

church should set apart a day for fasting and prayer. The advice was followed; the assistance of the Spirit was earnestly invoked, and not in vain; hearts became softened, the spirit of charity and Christian forgiveness came to prevail, the disaffected members returned to the bosom of the church, and they again went forward unitedly in the strength of the Lord.

In March, 1816, in consequence of a remissness in the payment of his salary, Mr. Wines asked a dismission. The church, however, were unwilling to part with so faithful a shepherd; better regulations were adopted for his support, and he for the time withdrew his request; and from July 1 to November 8, of that year, there were twelve accessions to the church.

On the 25th of November, of the same year, the pastor again asked his dismission, specifying the following reasons:

"1. I have settled convictions that I can be more useful in some other part of Christ's vineyard.

"2. For a considerable time I have had an ardent desire to go into the Western States and territories, to see what can be done to promote the cause of the Redeemer among the destitute people there.

"3. With this conviction and this desire, I do not believe I can be useful and happy, if I can be compelled to continue here.

"4. I find it to be a fact, that, considering the want of punctuality in the payment of my salary, I cannot support my family comfortably on my salary and the income of my property unless I labor with my hands, which I do not think it my duty to do."

In answer to this request, we find recorded the following:

"Voted, not to grant the pastor a dismission for all the reasons which he urges. The 4th reason was objected to.

"Voted, to grant him a dismission on the ground that the

parish have granted him a dismission, namely, the prospect of his greater usefulness in some other place."

A council ratified the dismission on Dec. 4th, thus ending a pastorate of nearly twenty-one years, the faithful labors of which, with God's blessing, had raised the church from a state of extreme depression to one of prosperity and strength.

In the following April, and again in July, a call was extended to the Rev. Caleb Clark to settle over the church as its pastor. These were not accepted.

The seed sown by Mr. Wines continued to bear fruit; and during the year succeeding his dismissal fifteen were added to the church. Among these were Loviney and Lydia Bascom.

On the first of September, 1818, it was voted by the church to give Mr. James R. Wheelock, a son of President Wheelock of Dartmouth college, a call to the pastorate. His letter of acceptance, bearing date the 6th of the following November, is worthy of presentation. It is in the folfollowing words:

To the Congregational Church in Newport:

My Christian Brethren: Your invitation to me to take the pastoral charge of your Church, I consider as an invitation to enter upon a connection that involves a responsibility the most mighty that can rest upon a mortal. Weighty as it is, relying, I trust, on Divine assistance, I have concluded to accept your call, and do hereby consent to take the Pastoral charge of your Church.

Eternity alone can unveil the important consequences that depend on the proposed relation. In view of it, and in view of the solemn day when I shall stand before my Final Judge to render an account of my stewardship, what reason have I to tremble lest the curses reserved for the unfaithful steward may on that day await me.

I hope I feel in some degree my own insufficiency for the

work ; and the need I shall have of His aid who has promised His presence and assistance to all His faithful servants, even to the end of the world. I need your prayers that I may receive that Divine aid, and I hope, my brethren, I shall not only have your prayers, but your candor and your friendship. While the Church expect me to be faithful in all duties as its Pastor, I trust they will not forget their duty to be faithful with me.

Praying that the connection may be for the good of Zion, and that God's blessing may continue to rest upon you collectively and individually, I subscribe myself your friend and brother in the Gospel,

James R. Wheelock.

Hanover, Nov. 6, 1818.

Mr. Wheelock was ordained on the 2d of December. He was a man of ardor and earnestness. It was early in his pastorate that the Sabbath-school was first instituted, which has proved so efficient an auxiliary to the church. No record remains of its formation ; but from circumstances clearly in the memory of those with whom I have conversed, taken in connection with the records of the church, there seems to be no reasonable doubt that it was formed in the summer of 1819. It embraced as pupils only the smaller children, and was held on Sunday mornings, before the church service, in the school-house which then stood on the easterly side of the river near the intervale bridge. The pastor at first acted as superintendent ; and our present Dea. Joseph Wilcox, having then recently united with the church, was one of the first teachers. The exercises consisted of recitations of verses of scripture by the pupils, which they had learned during the week. Dea. (then Mr.) Wilcox was the first superintendent after the pastor gave up that service.

Mr. Wheelock's pastorate continued little over four years, he being dismissed by a mutual council, February 23, 1823. There were, however, in that short period, 148 added to the

church. Among these, besides Joseph Wilcox, were John Trask, Jr., Lemuel Osgood, Dr. John B. McGregor, Mary McGregor, Frederick Aiken, Frederick Claggett, Daniel Wilmarth, Lucretia and Nancy Wilmarth, Elmira Hurd, and Eunice Bascom.

It was during this pastorate, in the year 1822, that the church edifice where we now worship was erected.

From the dismission of Mr. Wheelock there was a vacancy in the pastorate until the following January, during which time difficulties arose between some members of the church, which proved so serious as to require for their settlement the assistance of an ecclesiastical council, which was held on the 17th of September. It advised terms of adjustment, and recommended to the church to set apart a day to be observed as a day of fasting and prayer, which was accordingly done, the day appointed for the purpose being the 6th of November, 1823. In the morning a sermon was preached, from the text of Rev. 2:4, 5: "Nevertheless, I have *somewhat* against thee, because thou has left thy first love. Remember, therefore, from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

By whom this sermon was preached, no record states. There is reason to believe, however, that it was by the Rev. John Woods; for it appears, by a vote of the church of the date July 2, 1823, "that the Rev. John Woods be acting moderator while residing among us." He had formerly been settled in Warner; but his pastorate there had ended, and he was then residing in Newport. In the afternoon, a paper, previously drawn up and signed by the members, containing mutual acknowledgments, was read; the members then solemnly renewed their covenant with God and with each other, agreed to sit down the next Sabbath to the table of the Lord, and separated better Christians, and, it is to be hoped, better men.

Harmony prevailing now among the brethren, they were ready to go on together in the work of the Master; and one week after the last event here recorded, being November 13, the church voted to extend to Mr. Woods a call to become its pastor. The call was accepted, and he was installed on the 28th of January, 1824. His yearly salary was $450.

A learned scholar, a clear thinker, a sound theologian, discreet and judicious in affairs, Mr. Woods entered upon his pastorate with the united confidence of the church. How well he acquitted himself in his high trust is fresh still in the memory of many of our people. They remember him, as, with dignified and courteous mien, solemn and thoughtful, with decision and firmness in all his purposes, he went in and out before the people to break to them the bread of life; which he continued to do for over twenty-seven years. Many of our present membership date the beginning of their Christian lives during the ministry of Mr. Woods. There were added to the church during his pastorate, 329.

During this period the interior of the church edifice underwent extensive modification to bring it within the requirements of more modern ideas. By the exertions and liberality of many of the members, of whom, I am told, Dr. John B. McGregor was foremost, the church was supplied with an organ, which, for many years, under the presiding genius of his daughter, our present esteemed friend Mrs. Christopher, added largely not only to the music, but to the general spirit of the service.

This period also covered the semi-centennial year of the existence of the church, which was appropriately observed. Of the date April 15, 1829, there is remaining the following record: "Voted, to observe the 28th day of October next, it being then half a century since this C^{hh} was gathered, as a season of Thanksgiving to God in view of signal mercies bestowed upon the C^{hh} in times past, and united prayer for

the continuance of his goodness." The day was accordingly "observed," says the record, "as a season of praise to God for past mercies, humiliation for present lukewarmness, and prayer for future blessings. A sermon was preached by the pastor from Deut. 8 : 2 : 'And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, *and* to prove thee, to know what was in thy heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.'"

Mr. Woods was an early and earnest worker in the temperance reform. As early as March, 1821, the church had passed a vote disapproving the use of spirit at funerals, and in May, 1828, a resolution "that, as friends of morality and religion, they will in their families and spheres of action use their influence by all proper and laudable means to check the progress of intemperance and promote the cause of temperance." But there appears, in the hand-writing of Mr. Woods, drawn up in March, and adopted by the church Aug. 31, 1832, a report of a committee, powerfully and graphically portraying the evil consequences of the use of alcoholic liquors; declares, among other things, that it has been ascertained, by diligent and careful inquiry, that more than half the excommunications from the churches in New England, for the preceding fifty years, had been for the sin of intemperance; that more than half of the remaining half of the cases of discipline which had disturbed the peace, weakened the strength, and marred the beauty of the church, had originated in the use of strong drink; and recommends the passage of a resolution requiring a pledge of total abstinence from the sale or use of spirit as a condition of future admission to membership. In September, 1841, the church adopted the rule of total abstinence as a requirement applicable to all members.

But towards the last of his pastorate, dissensions arose in the church, which grew to such proportions as seriously to affect, for the time, its prosperity. Although in no way

responsible for them, either in their origin or their progress, the pastor's situation was such as necessarily to bring him within their influence, and in consequence his usefulness became impaired. The details of the schism need not be rehearsed. To many they are still fresh and vivid, and the tale when told seems like a drama. Happily, it has passed away. But it erected its monument; and the Methodist church of our town, doing faithful work, as we ought to be glad to believe, in the cause of the Master, will continue to tell to the children how the fathers fell out by the way.

These circumstances so wrought upon the sensibilities of the pastor that he several times expressed a wish to resign.

This was not acceded to by the church until the summer of 1851, when it came reluctantly to the belief that it would be better to grant his request. A united and unanimous call by the church and society was extended to Mr. Henry Cummings, then a young man, and a student in the Andover Theological Seminary, with an offer of an annual salary of $700. This call was accepted, in a letter which I cannot refrain from reproducing. It forms a new era in the progress of our history, and is worthy to be preserved as one of its landmarks. Its introductory parts are explained by the fact that he had preached for several preceding Sabbaths with a view to such a call. He says,—

Brethren and Friends: I have, through your respective committees, received from you, as a Congregational Church and Society, a united and cordial invitation to become your pastor. Such an invitation had not for some time past been wholly unexpected, save in the *unanimity*. For weeks the decision to which I ought to arrive, in view of it, has been with me a subject of prayerful deliberation, and upon it the advice of several of the older brethren and fathers in the ministry has been solicited.

When I thought of the varied and heavy duties which are assumed with a pastoral charge; when I remembered that

many of its labors took directly note of another life, and that to many precious souls they might prove "a savor of death unto death,"—the question forced itself upon the mind, "Who is sufficient for these things?"

When I called to mind your delicate position as a church, and the embarrassments in which you have been recently involved; when I contrasted the age and experience that had so long been at the helm, with my own youth and inexperience,—I instinctively shrunk from the responsibility to be proffered me.

But the kind reception that I have uniformly found in your families; the desire that you have as a Church and Society publicly expressed; your liberal provision for my support, so unitedly made; the indications afforded that you will coöperate in carrying out the spiritual work for which the ministry was instituted; the warm wishes of your pastor (which he has personally expressed to me) that a younger brother should be invited to this ministerial field; and the advice of older clergymen whom I have consulted,—all combine to obviate some of the objections, and to diminish the force of others.

Hence, in accordance with my present convictions of duty, I cannot refuse the service to which you have called me. But, recognizing as I do in your request a call from the great Head of the Church, I also esteem it a privilege to accept of that invitation.

Praying fervently that this union, if perfected, may result in our highest spiritual good; and that we who unite to worship our Saviour on earth may all be accepted of him in heaven,

I remain

Yours in Christ,

Henry Cummings.

On the 16th of July, 1851, by an ecclesiastical council convened for the purpose, the pastoral relation of Mr. Woods

with the church was dissolved; and on the same day, and by the same council, Mr. Cummings was ordained as his successor.

In the course of the next year after the settlement of Mr. Cummings, the Spirit descended with power; and our church, in common with the Baptist and Methodist churches, experienced a revival greater in extent than the town had seen before. He will allow me, I trust, to quote from his own account of this awakening:

"Near the close of October the first instances of conversion came to light. Thenceforward the work advanced with increasing power. But its movements were noiseless. Every day added to the number of believers. In January, fifty-three made profession of their faith in Christ; and before the close of the year the aggregate had swelled to one hundred. About twenty-five were heads of families, and sixty members of the Sabbath-school. All ages were favored, from ten to seventy. Nearly the whole church was revived, and some who had secretly indulged a religious hope for twenty or thirty years found this refreshing as life from the dead, and were able to come out boldly as the disciples of Christ. The work affected the whole community, and made striking exhibition of the sovereignty of Divine grace. About as many were added to each—the Baptist and Methodist churches—as to the Congregational."

It has been a pleasure of no ordinary kind to look over the records of our church during the pastorates of Mr. Woods and Mr. Cummings, and to see scattered through the pages the names of those coming forward in the Christian cause, who have since adorned the faith and proved ornaments to the church. Many are still with us; and we look back together over the century with united interest, while we trust its examples and its experiences shall guide us to a closer walk with the Saviour. Some beloved ones have gone to their rest, and we see them no more. We

cherish their memories, and trust yet to be with them in that better world,

> "Where congregations ne'er break up,
> And Sabbaths have no end."

Mr. Cummings having received a call to what he thought to be a wider field of usefulness, tendered his resignation, and was dismissed by a council on the 25th of July, 1866. The whole number added to the church during his pastorate was 170.

In December, after the resignation of Mr. Cummings, the church and society extended a united call to the pastorate to the Rev. M. Bradford Boardman. This call was not accepted, and the church remained without a pastor for something over two years, during the first of which the pulpit was supplied as preachers could be secured from time to time. Mr. George R. W. Scott, then a student in the Andover Theological Seminary, had during that year preached several Sabbaths much to the acceptance of the church and congregation, and early in July, 1867, he was invited to supply the desk for one year with a view to a settlement, should that prove agreeable to both parties at the end of that time. The proposal was accepted, and in July of the following year Mr. Scott received a united call from the church and society to the pastorate. This call was also accepted, and he was ordained on the 17th of the following September. The church prospered under his ministrations, and he remained its pastor until December 2, 1873, when, having tendered his resignation, he was dismissed by a council convened for the purpose.

It was during the year which preceded the ordination of Mr. Scott that the interior of our church edifice underwent those extensive changes by which it has assumed its present form, and that the old organ was replaced by the much finer one which commemorates as well an act of munificent liberality, as the worth of our deeply lamented sister in

Christ, Lizzie A. Richards.* It was during Mr. Scott's actual pastorate that the present chapel, which adds so greatly to the convenience and comfort of our social meetings and all our social occasions, was erected. The labors of Mr. Scott were blessed by 94 accessions to the church.

Very few are the words that can be further appropriately spoken. All remember the suggestion, by Mr. Scott, of the name of our present esteemed minister, and of his sojourn with us until be finally consented to accept our call, and was, on the 24th of March, 1875, to the unanimous acceptance of the church and congregation, duly installed as our pastor. His labors thus far have been blessed by sixty-six additions to the membership of the church. The latest steps in our temporal progress have been the erection of the new parsonage which graces the church lot, and which, we hope, renders lighter and more pleasing the labors of him who breaks to us the bread of life; and the replacing, by the Ladies' Society, of the old windows of the church by the present more modern and more pleasing ones.

Nothing indicates that any one was chosen to the office of Deacon at the organization of the church. It is matter of conjecture with myself that it may have been thought, that, from analogy to the origin of the office in apostolic times, there was no occasion for such an election until the church should be provided with a pastor. At any rate, soon after the ordination of Mr. Remmele, the name of Josiah Stevens appears in the records with the title of Deacon. We have already noticed the election to that office of Jesse Wilcox in 1785, and again in 1791. The others who have held the office were,—Uriah Wilcox, chosen in 1795; Moses Noyes and Elnathan Hurd, June, 1819; Sylvester Hurd, Josiah Stevens, and Joseph Wilcox, in June, 1829; Henry Chapin, in June, 1832. The last whom it is necessary to mention

* She died May 25, 1868, aged 20 years; and the new organ, bearing a tablet inscribed to her memory, was a memorial gift to the church by her father, Dea. Dexter Richards.

was David B. Chapin, chosen deacon in May, 1835. We remember the love he bore the church, and the faithfulness with which he devoted himself to its interests, as well as the consistency of Christian life with which he showed forth the spirit of the Master. He rests from his labors, and his works do follow him.

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Up to about the year 1803, the town, in its character as a body corporate, had exercised the power of providing for the temporal support of the ministry. I find no record upon the subject, but it is fairly to be presumed that such of the citizens as held Baptist and other sentiments not in accordance with those of the Congregational church, seeing themselves composing a large numerical proportion if not an actual majority of the town, would reasonably object to being taxed to support a teaching of views to which they did not subscribe. At any rate, after about that time, no action by the town upon the subject was had; and in that year a Congregational society, for the support of the gospel in the town, was incorporated by an act of the legislature. This society existed until the year 1828, when, the provisions of the charter proving unsatisfactory, it was abandoned, and the present society was formed to supersede it, under a general law passed by the legislature of the preceding year.

A Hundred Years. While our church has, during that length of time, been engaged in the work of upholding Zion, great events have been going on in the secular world. Taking its rise in the midst of our Revolution, it has seen the enfranchisement of the American States, and their advance from a scarely tenable power, through their successive acquisitions, to one of the greatest and most prosperous of the nations. It has witnessed the missionary enterprise struggling into existence, and finally carrying the gospel to the remotest of benighted peoples. It has witnessed, through the revolutions of nations, many peoples rising from beneath the heel of power, to freedom and the enjoy-

ment of popular rights. From vehicles of the most primitive kind it has witnessed a progress from step to step, until the steamship vanquishing the ocean, and the locomotive overcoming the mountains, have neutralized space. It has seen the laborious and painful processes carried on by women in lowly dwellings, replaced by machinery appropriating the powers of the elements. From the revelation of Franklin's kite it has witnessed a progress in electric discovery, until the wings of the wind are but the movements of the sloth, and the ends of the earth are become speaking companions. It has seen awakened genius peering into the mysteries of the universe,—with its modern instruments even scaling the heavens,—for the gratification of human curiosity, or the accomplishment of human purposes. It has seen man pushing back inquiry into the laws of matter, until some even begin to fancy that the mysteries of first causes are within their grasp.

A hundred years! We have witnessed their revolutions and their progress. But amidst them all there has been seen no change in the great necessity which lies at the foundation of the Christian church. They have shown man no less an immortal soul; they have seen him, by all his strides of power and of knowledge, made not less by one iota a sinful being, and not by that less needful of a Saviour to bring him back to God.

Amidst all the changes in institutions, and amidst all the progress of a wonderfully progressive century, the church has seen no change in the importance of its work. It finds men moved by the same impulses, falling before the same allurements, going still to the tomb, encountering as surely the realities of a life to come. There still rests upon the members of the church the same eternal duty of bringing to the maintenance of its purity every Christian virtue, that its candlestick may not he removed out of its place, but that it may continue still to lead the way to that rest which remaineth to the people of God.

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